

IN THE ABSTRACT

Please amend the Abstract as follows:

ABSTRACT

(b) A spectral distance calculator includes a calculator; ~~comprising means for~~ performing spectral distance calculations to compare a spectrum of ~~for comparison of an~~ input spectrum, ~~from an input signal in the presence of a noise signal; and a reference~~ spectrum; A memory means for pre-storing a noise spectrum from the noise signal. A masking unit; ~~and means for masking~~ the spectral distance between the input spectrum and the reference spectrum with respect to the pre-stored noise spectrum.

To be published with FIG 2.